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INFO RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 001296

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DOE FOR GPERSON, CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR SLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2016

TAGS: EPET ENERG ASEC PTER NI

SUBJECT: UNCONFIRMED REPORT OF DEATH OF U.K. NATIONAL HELD HOSTAGE

REF: LAGOS 1294

Classified By: Consul General Brian Browne for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

¶1. (C) According to an unconfirmed report, Paul Smith, a U.K. national, died on October 19 following an illness. Smith, one of seven hostages held by Niger Delta youths who attacked an ExxonMobil residential complex on October 3, works for Sparrows, a U.K. oil services company on contract to ExxonMobil.

¶2. (C) Mark Staub of the ExxonMobil Incident Coordination Team told Pol/Econ Chief that one of the hostages called the U.K. office of Sparrows on the afternoon of October 19. The hostage said Paul Smith had been ill, and when the others tried to wake him, they discovered he had died. According to Staub, the kidnappers later called the company to report the death. The ExxonMobil Incident Coordinating Team, through the Federal Government negotiator, has asked the kidnappers to return the body. Arrangements were made to retrieve the body, but the kidnappers told the group to return to the rendezvous point the following day.

¶3. (C) In a conversation with the British High Commissioner, Governor Victor Attah said that another of the hostages might also be ill.

¶4. (C) Although the death has not been confirmed, the ExxonMobil Incident Coordination Team believes rumors of the death are circulating widely within the oil community.
BROWNE